



Natural Area NEWS

Fall 2003

No. 14

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The 30th National Natural Areas Conference was recently held in Madison, Wisconsin. Its theme was defining a natural areas land ethic. It was fitting that this was the theme, here at the University where Professor Aldo Leopold developed his land ethic. Aldo Leopold said “a thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community.” Leopold understood that ethics direct individuals to cooperate with others within their community for the mutual benefit of all. His idea was that “community” should include the non-human elements: soil, water, plants and animals – the land. He said “Health is the capacity of the land for self-renewal. Conservation is our effort to understand and preserve this capacity.”

Over 700 people from nearly all 50 states and numerous countries gathered to explore the role natural lands play in Aldo Leopold’s vision of ecological conscience. Numerous speakers reported on natural areas research management techniques, invasive species control, and partnerships. There is some bad news, such as the increasing onslaught of invasive species. There is also good news, such as large scale restorations, numerous partnerships, State Wildlife Grant funding for habitat protection and management. The research effort to find biological control agents for garlic mustard is showing positive results.

More people, more agencies, more researchers are working to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of our biotic communities. It is heartening to realize so many are striving toward this goal.

Here in Indiana, the same effort is underway, from the same array of interested parties: natural area professionals, volunteers, land trusts, agencies, working together in numerous partnerships. This newsletter contains information on some of these partnerships, and reports on the progress being made, as we strive to preserve Indiana’s biotic communities.

Nature Preserves is a division of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources

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New nature preserves

Seven new nature preserves have been dedicated thus far in 2003, encompassing 1151.87 acres. Indiana's Nature Preserve system consists of 198 nature preserves protecting over 26,300 acres.

Anderson Falls: Anderson Falls Nature Preserve, Bartholomew County, 44 acres, contains notable examples of mature mesic and dry-mesic upland forest through which a half mile stretch of Fall Fork of Clifty Creek flows. Other plant communities include limestone cliffs and streamside gravel washes. The focal point of the park is the 14 foot high waterfall that occurs where Louisville Limestone overlies the less resilient Waldron Shale. The tract is owned and under the administration of the Bartholomew County Park and Recreation Board.

Black Rock Barrens: Black Rock Barrens Nature Preserve, Warren County, is a 100 acre property located along the Wabash River. This tract contains siltstone barrens, mixed dry upland forest, floodplain forest, and an associated floodplain forest restoration. This tract is owned and under the administration of NICHES Land Trust, Corp.

Blue River Gravel Wash Barrens: Blue River Gravel Wash Barrens Nature Preserve, Crawford County, 78 acres, contains gravel wash barrens, limestone cliffs, and a floodplain forest. It is under the management of the Division of Forestry as a unit of the Harrison-Crawford State Forest.

Boot Lake: Boot Lake Nature Preserve, Elkhart County, 200.87 acres, contains hydric peaty muck flats, hydric peaty sand flats which support disjunct Atlantic Coastal Plain plants, buttonbush swamps, associated upland woodlands and fields, and a prairie restoration. This tract is owned by the City of Elkhart and is under the administration of the Director of Public Works and Utilities, City of Elkhart.

Granville Sand Barrens: Granville Sand Barrens Nature Preserve, Tippecanoe County, is a 40 acre property. This tract contains a sand barrens plant community, which is an extremely rare habitat in Indiana. The tract is owned and under the administration of NICHES Land Trust, Corp.

Mitchell Sinkhole Plain: Mitchell Sinkhole Plain Nature Preserve, Lawrence County, is a 454 acre portion of Spring Mill State Park. This preserve is an example of classic karst terrain consisting of a very pronounced sinkhole plain bordering the entrenched valley of Mill Creek. This area is dominated by an abundance of sinkholes in various states of activity. This portion of Spring Mill represents the largest single block of undisturbed sinkhole plain in a natural forest community remaining in Indiana.

Section Six Flatwoods: Section Six Flatwoods Nature Preserve, Posey County, 235 acres, is owned and managed by the Division of Nature Preserves. This property consists of a significant and high quality southern lowland flatwoods forest community dominated by post oak, swamp white oak, southern red oak, pin oak, and shellbark hickory.

Natural Area News is published by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Nature Preserves. All questions, comments, or requests should be mailed to the Division of Nature Preserves at 402 W. Washington St., Rm W267, Indianapolis, IN 46204. We can be reached by calling 317-232-4052, or faxing to 317-233-0133.

Nature Preserves is looking for articles to include in *Natural Area News*. If you or your group would like to submit any news or information relating to natural areas and their protection, please send it to the Division of Nature Preserves, attention Ron Hellmich.

Nature Preserves: Identifying, protecting and managing an array of nature preserves to maintain viable examples of all of Indiana's natural communities for the benefit of the natural communities, their representative species, and future generations.



Some Indiana Land Trusts:**Northern Indiana:**

ACRES Land Trust
2000 North Wells St.
Fort Wayne, IN 46808

Save the Dunes Foundation
444 Barker Road
Michigan City, IN 46360

LaPorte County Conservation
Trust
405 Maple Avenue
LaPorte, IN 46350

Glacial Ridge Historic Land
Trust
PO Box 627
New Paris, IN 46553-0627

Shirley Heinze Land Trust
444 Barker Road
Michigan City, IN 46360

Wawasee Area Conservancy
Foundation
6938 East Waco Drive
Syracuse, IN 46567

Central Indiana:

Central Indiana Land Trust,
Incorporated
PO Box 509074
Indianapolis, IN 46250

Southern Indiana:

Sycamore Land Trust
PO Box 7801
Bloomington, IN
47407-7801

Buffalo Trace Land Trust
PO Box 2
Mt. St. Francis, IN 47146

Indiana Karst Conservancy
P.O. Box 2401
Indianapolis, IN 46206-2401

Wabash Heritage Land Trust
PO Box 732
New Harmony, IN 47631-
0732

Oxbow, Inc.

Oxbow, Inc., formed in 1985 by passing a hat in a room of people concerned about wetland preservation, achieved a long sought goal in 2003. Oxbow, Inc. attained a solid block of ownership of about 700 acres of wetlands and flood plain in the Great Miami River bottoms lying on the Ohio-Indiana border adjacent to Lawrenceburg and Greendale in Indiana. Along with about 300 acres in conservation easements, Oxbow, Inc. controls nearly 1000 acres of this unique habitat. With this ownership has come the responsibility of active management of the land. In this regard, Oxbow, Inc. has been planting prairie grasses and forbs, creating new wetlands, and improving both roads and public access to the area.

Other projects that will continue to improve roads in the area and provide places where wildlife can be viewed without disturbing the animals that call the area home are underway. Oxbow, Inc. is a unique all volunteer organization that is comprised of hunters, conservationists, farmers, bird watchers, botanists, and many other interested enthusiasts. Oxbow, Inc. is united by the common value of preserving, protecting and improving the historic flood plain at the mouth of the Great Miami River. The Oxbow area is a migratory stop for thousands of ducks during the spring migration and for shore birds in fall migration, a resting and feeding area for hundreds of wading birds (primarily Great Egret, Great-blue Heron, Black-crowned Night Heron, and Green Heron during the summer and fall, and a hunting ground for raptors in the winter. Peregrine Falcon, Black Vulture, Osprey, Northern Harrier, and Bald Eagle are regular visitors. There have been over 280 species of birds recorded in the Oxbow making it an Indiana and Ohio birding treasure.

Jon Seymour, President of Oxbow, Inc. P.O. Box 43391, Cincinnati, OH 45243

Southeastern IN:

Oxbow, Inc.
PO Box 43391
Cincinnati, OH 45243

Oak Heritage Conser-
vancy
PO Box 335
Hanover, IN 47243

East Central Indiana:

Redtail Conservancy
201 E. Jackson Street
Muncie, IN 47308

Whitewater Valley
Land Trust
4910 Shoemaker Road
Centerville, IN 47330

West Central Indiana:

NICHES
PO Box 2790
West Lafayette, IN
47906-2790

Statewide:

The Nature Conservancy
1505 N. Delaware
Indianapolis, IN 46204

DNR BIRDATHON BIG DAY

Better planning, better than expected waterfowl and shorebirds, good weather, and good passerines. All make for exceptional birding. Toss in a few rarities and you really do have a “Big Day”! On May 16, the DNR Team made up of Lee Casebere, Cliff Chapman, Cloyce Hedge and Roger Hedge had everything fall into place. We topped our previous high count by 12 species, no small feat in seven years of conducting a team count. Our total this year was 167 species that included a “who’s who” of rarities like Yellow-headed Blackbird, Hudsonian Godwit, and PACIFIC LOON!

We began our quest at 1:03 a.m. by listening for night birds at The Nature Conservancy’s birding mecca known as the Kankakee Sands in Newton County. We quickly ticked off Grasshopper Sparrow, Sedge Wren, Pied-billed Grebe, Sora, Woodcock and American Bittern. On to nearby Willow Slough Fish and Wildlife Area and then up to the Lake Michigan lakefront before dawn to pick up owls. After checking off the expected owls, we landed at Michigan City Harbor at daylight. Two gulls, Caspian Tern, Ruddy Turnstone, and a surprising Black-crowned Night-Heron awaited us. Next stop was Beverly Shores that got us Prairie Warbler and the prized Pacific Loon!

After a traditional stop for Hooded Warbler, we went to Indiana Dunes State Park. We missed the Prothonotary Warbler there, but did get Golden-winged Warbler and Louisiana Waterthrush. We reluctantly pointed the car toward northern Lake County where we hoped the lakefront traps would be productive. Highlights were Yellow-headed Blackbird, Double-crested Cormorant, Lincoln’s Sparrow, and several vireos and warblers.

We then bolted to Grand Kankakee Marsh County Park in southern Lake County where we got Northern Shoveler, Redhead, Black Tern, and a totally unexpected Osprey. On to Beaver Lake Nature Preserve and back to Kankakee Sands where we found Blue Grosbeak, Henslow’s Sparrow and Bell’s Vireos. But the real treat was a Hudsonian Godwit in breeding plumage! At nearby Willow Slough we found Forster’s and Common Terns, and Bonaparte’s Gull.

Driving south along US 41 in Benton County, a female Ruddy Duck was spotted in a wet field! We continued south to Big Pine Creek Valley for southern species and picked up Carolina Chickadee, Yellow-throated Warbler, Kentucky Warbler and Summer Tanager. In Montgomery County at an area known as “The Burn”, we logged Northern Harrier, Pectoral Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, and Short-billed Dowitcher. We ended a great day of birding excited, but exhausted. We also raised a lot of money and thank all of you for your generous contributions to protecting our birds.

By Roger Hedge, Ecologist with the Division of Nature Preserves

Sponsored by the Amos Butler chapter of the National Audubon Society. This event raises funds for the Marian College Ecolab, bird conservation studies in Indiana, and acquisition of rainforest in Panama.



Indiana Heritage Trust

Thus far in 2003, a number of IHT projects have been approved for the following significant natural areas in partnership with the Division of Nature Preserves.

Site	Location (county)	Feature	Cooperators (with DNP)
Stoner Hill	Harrison	upland forest	TNC
Green's Bluff Addition	Owen	forested upland and ravines	TNC
Lick Creek Summit	Wayne	upland forest	Ropchan; Whitewater; IPL
Buena Vista Glade	Harrison	oak woodlands	TNC
Calvert & Porter Woods Addition	Montgomery	old growth flatwoods	NICHES, TNC
Manitou Island Wetlands Addition	Fulton	lake front; bog; marsh; forest	TNC; DFW; Bob Kern*
Big Walnut Hemlock Refugia	Putnam	forested ravines; hemlock; critical buffer	CILTI; TNC; DOR
Cedar Creek Bottoms Addition	Allen	rookery; floodplain forest; upland forest; restored prairie and forest	ACRES

DNP = Div. of Nature Preserves; TNC = The Nature Conservancy; ACRES = Acres Land Trust; NICHES = Niches Land Trust; IPL = IPALCO Golden Eagle Award Program; DOR = IDNR Division of Outdoor Recreation; DFW = IDNR Division of Fish & Wildlife; CILTI = Central Indiana Land Trust; Ropchan = Ropchan Foundation; Whitewater = Whitewater Valley Land Trust; * bargain sale

Using your car to support another cause...

You can still donate to the Heritage Trust Fund without buying an environmental license plate.

Donated money is used to acquire the same types of land as the license plate revenue.

Make your check payable to the **Indiana Heritage Trust Fund** and send your donation to: John Goss, Director, Department of Natural Resources 402 W. Washington St. Room W256 Indianapolis, IN 46204

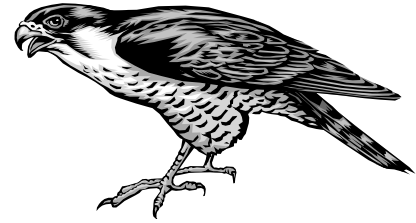
Have you noticed?

Are you interested in learning more about Indiana's native plants? The Division of Nature Preserves staff have been writing regular short feature articles on Indiana's native plants in *Outdoor Indiana*, the DNR's magazine. These articles, which began with the May/June 1996 issue, highlight a particular species or group of plants. Look under the Plant Feature section of the magazine for these articles.

Outdoor Indiana frequently carries other articles of interest to natural area enthusiasts.

To subscribe, send a \$12 payment, and your name and address to *Outdoor Indiana*, 402 W. Washington St. W255B, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2742. For more information, call 1-877-463-6367.

Nongame & Endangered Wildlife Program



Tern Bar Slough

The Division of Fish and Wildlife has recently acquired 840 acres in Gibson County for nesting habitat for the state endangered interior least terns. Known as Tern Bar Slough, it is located immediately south of Gibson Lake. The Division of Fish and Wildlife was fortunate to receive this permanent easement due to the Wetland Conservation Reserve Program (WCRP) paying the bulk of the cost. The current land use is agriculture, but will be restored primarily for the terns, but obviously other wildlife species as well.

Aquatic exotic control planning underway

Monkey pox, toxic algae and flying carp.

It sounds like a bad horror movie, but they are real problems for Indiana. Increasing global trade and travel have brought hundreds of exotic species and diseases to Hoosier doorsteps. Aquatic invaders such as zebra mussels, bighead carp, purple loosestrife, white perch and sea lamprey cost Hoosiers millions of dollars each year in control measures and lost natural resource value.

Indiana DNR biologists, university researchers, industry leaders, and conservation and environmental groups have joined together to address the problem. A group of people interested in control of aquatic nuisance species (ANS) met in April to begin developing a long-term ANS management plan for Indiana. This group has completed a draft plan which is available at: <http://www.invasive species.in.gov/> or by calling Gwen White at (317) 931-0908.

Once finalized, the plan will be used as a road map for guiding nuisance control efforts and enable Indiana to apply for federal funding of around \$100,000 per year to support nuisance aquatic species control projects. The Indiana state legislature also recently approved an increase in the Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) boater fee to generate about \$1.1 million annually for sediment removal and control of nuisance plants and animals in Indiana waters. The plan will provide a basis for targeting these and other state actions on invasive species.

Musings



"It is the land on which we all depend in the last essence. It is the land and the very soil, the trees and waters, the dales and glens which we love.

Without vision a land will die. Without inspiration we remain disconnected from the immortal order of all things"

Richard Lieber
Founder of the

Would you like to contribute to Natural Area News? Just send your story, article, or poem to Ron Hellmich, Division of Nature Preserves, 402 W. Washington St., Rm W267, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2742. Please include a phone number so we can contact you if we have questions.

Herb and Charlotte Read: Sagamores of the Wabash

Herbert and Charlotte Read, both recognized in northwest Indiana for their work on environmental causes and the preservation of the Indiana Dunes, were honored with the state's highest award. Governor Frank O'Bannon named the couple "Sagamores of the Wabash" in January of this year. The awards were presented by Lori Kaplan, commissioner of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management.

The Sagamore of the Wabash award is a personal tribute usually given to those who have rendered a distinguished service to the state or to the governor. Among those who have received Sagamores have been astronauts, presidents, ambassadors, artists, musicians, politicians, and ordinary citizens who have contributed greatly to our Hoosier heritage.

William Barnes Authors New Book

William R. Barnes, Senior, the first director of the Division of Nature Preserves, has authored a new book that will be out soon. His book *Natural Resources and the Great Depression in Martin County and South Central Indiana* looks at activities of New Deal programs during the Depression and how it reflected a growing awareness of conservation at that time. Mr. Barnes brings a personal perspective as he participated as a resource professional in some of these projects.

The book will be published in early 2004 as Volume 56 of the Indiana Historical Collections of the Indiana Historical Bureau, State of Indiana. Significant support for the publication has been provided by the Indiana Natural Resources Foundation and other donors. List price for the volume will be \$14.95.

A special prepublication offer is in place at 25 percent off list cost--\$10.14 per book. Orders will be accepted until January 15, 2004; cost, tax, and shipping will be billed upon delivery. To order, please call the Indiana Historical Bureau at 317-232-2535.

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Division of Nature Preserves
402 W Washington St Rm W267
Indianapolis IN 46204

Announcements

2003 Governor's Conference on the Environment

The 2003 Governor's Conference on the Environment will be held on October 30, 2003 at Ft. Benjamin Harrison. This year's topic is "Environmental Investment: Increasing Your Rate of Return." The keynote speaker is Samuel H. Wilson, M.D., Deputy Director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, National Institute of Health.

The Conference will explore how maintaining and protecting a high quality environment is a key to a high quality economy. There will be panel discussions on Exotics and Invasives; Quality of Living; and Health and Healthy Places. Afternoon workshops are: Planting the Right Tree, Education Sampler, Exploring Fort Harrison, Sustainable Communities, Water Issues, World Water Monitoring.

Registration is due by October 17, and the cost is \$25 per person. For more information see www.in.gov/dnr/2003govconf.